



Procedure

Distance education – Subclass 500 (schools) visa

Version effective: 24/01/2020
Version: 3.2

Audience

Education Queensland International staff ([EQI staff](#)), EQI [school staff](#), [Overseas students](#), EQI [homestay providers](#), [parents/Department of Home Affairs \(DHA\) approved guardians](#) of Overseas students and their [agents](#).

Purpose

This procedure outlines the roles and responsibilities of employees of [schools](#) and EQI, and the steps they follow to facilitate EQI students studying a subject through a state school of distance education that is [EQI](#) accredited.

Overview

Overseas students attending secondary school may study a subject through the [Brisbane School of Distance Education](#) or the [Cairns School of Distance Education](#), as part of their [course](#), in [compelling circumstances](#) and where it is in the best educational interest of the Overseas student.

Any distance learning must be in addition to minimum face-to-face teaching requirements approved by the Department of Education or the Secretary as part of the registration of the course, if applicable.

An Overseas student can only study one subject by distance education at a time and cannot study more than one third of their course with EQI by distance education. In each compulsory study period for a course, the Overseas student must study at least one unit that is not by distance or online learning, unless the student is completing the last unit of their course. [Base school principals](#) or their [delegates](#) may approve Overseas student requests to study a subject by distance education. [Base school staff](#) support Overseas students throughout the period of their study by distance education.

Schools will be required to reimburse schools of distance education on a cost recovery basis where the school of distance education has accepted the EQI student to study via distance education after day 20. The cost is set at \$250 per subject per term. This cost includes all subject curriculum resources and administration charges.

EQI students are not charged additional tuition fees to study a subject by distance education.

Responsibilities

Overseas student

- request or approve the base school staff to arrange to study a subject through distance education
- adhere to the obligations in the [Standard terms and conditions](#) and Enrolment Agreement including maintain satisfactory course progress.

Base school staff

- identify requirement and/or manage Overseas student requests to study through distance education
- inform EQI of approved requests to study through distance education
- support Overseas students studying a subject through distance education
- maintain accurate and up-to-date records in OneSchool and the international student management system.

Distance education school staff

- assess and approve Overseas student requests to study a subject through distance education
- Monitor and support Overseas students studying a subject through distance education.

Distance education school principal

- oversee the Overseas student's enrolment in a subject studied through distance education
- ensure the Overseas student's progress in the subject is monitored in accordance with the [Course progress – Subclass 500 \(schools\) visa procedure](#) and the [Entry and course progress standards](#).

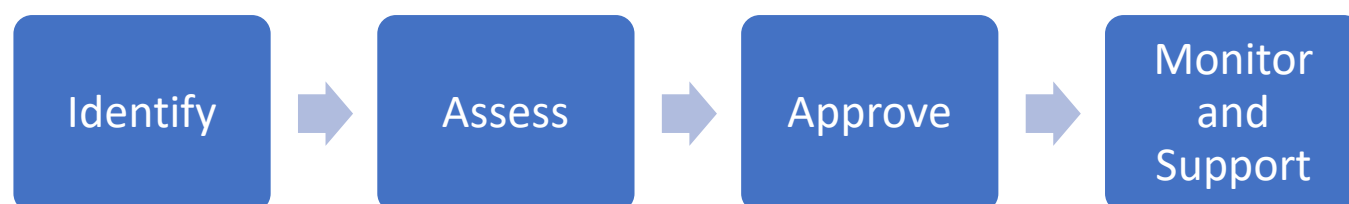
Base school principal (or delegate)

- appoint sufficient and suitably qualified staff (school staff) to facilitate Overseas students to study through distance education
- decide on Overseas student requests to study through distance education
- ensure the Overseas student's progress in the subject is monitored in accordance with the [Course progress – Subclass 500 \(schools\) visa procedure](#) and the [Entry and course progress standards](#).

EQI staff

- provide advice and support to school staff implementing this procedure
- ensure EQI is meeting its obligations under the Commonwealth legislation and legislative instruments in respect of distance education
- maintain accurate and up to date records including in HPE records and the international student management system.

Process



1. Identify

Base school staff

- identify the requirement, either prior to the Overseas student's arrival or on arrival, for them to study one subject through distance education
- consider the following factors:
 - the course the Overseas student is enrolled, that is, Senior High School, Junior High School, Study Abroad and Regional Study Abroad
 - subject availability at base school
 - base school timetable
 - Overseas student's pre-requisite requirements to return home to continue study
 - academic outcomes required, for example, Queensland Certification of Education (QCE) and Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR).

Overseas student

- identify the requirement, either prior to arrival or on arrival, to study a particular subject
- communicate this requirement to base school staff
- where a subject is required due to it being a pre-requisite to return to study in the Overseas student's home country, provide relevant evidence:
 - documentation from school in home country
 - email from parents stating the requirement
 - tertiary [prerequisite](#) information (essential and recommended study).

2. Assess

Base school staff

- determine if compelling circumstances exist. Compelling circumstances include where:
 - the Overseas student needs to study a particular subject
 - their school does not offer that subject or have capacity

- it would not be reasonable or possible for the EQI student to transfer to another school which does offer that subject
- determine if distance education is in the Overseas student's best educational interests:
 - use professional judgement and assess each case on its individual merits, for example, the Overseas student may need to study a language to enable seamless transition back to their home education system
 - liaise with the Overseas student's teacher(s) and guidance officer
 - collect documentary evidence to support the claim, for example, documentation from school in home country
- ensure that in each compulsory study period for a course, the Overseas student is studying at least one unit that is not by distance learning, unless the student is completing the last unit of their course
- liaise with relevant distance education school staff regarding the Overseas student studying one subject at the relevant school of distance education
- consider whether the Overseas student is incurring or is likely to incur additional costs or other requirements from undertaking distance learning
- consider whether the Overseas student will be unable to access the resources and community offered by the education institution, or opportunities for engaging with other overseas students while undertaking online or distance learning
- liaise with relevant distance education school staff regarding the Overseas student studying one subject at the relevant school of distance education
- email the distance education school staff with the following information:
 - Overseas student identification number
 - Overseas student name
 - proposed distance education subject
 - proposed start and end dates
 - reason for request to study a subject via distance education.

Distance education school staff

- assess the request for the Overseas student to study via distance education by considering:
 - subject availability
 - capacity, that is, staffing and resourcing requirements
 - prerequisites to study the subject requested, that is, language and age suitability
- notify school staff via email of acceptance or non-acceptance of the Overseas student into the subject pending base school principal approval:
 - where there is non-acceptance, include the reason/s for the decision.



3. Approve

Base school staff

- liaise with the Overseas student and parent to seek their approval to arrange for the Overseas student to study a subject by distance education
- request approval from the base school principal where the Overseas student and parent and school staff from the school of distance education agree with studying via distance education:
 - include all information obtained while identifying and assessing the request to study via distance education, that is, compelling circumstances.

Base school principal

- consider the information provided by base school staff
- decide to either approve or not approve the Overseas student's study through distance education:
 - where it is decided to approve study through distance education, advise school staff
 - where it is decided not to approve study through distance education, propose an alternative course of action and provide instruction to school staff to support the Overseas student in their subject selection.

Base school staff

- where study by distance education is not approved:
 - notify the Overseas student and their parents, refer the EQI students and parents to the [Complaints and appeals – Subclass 500 \(schools\) visa procedure](#), if required
 - follow the base school principal's instructions to support the Overseas student in their subject selection
 - notify distance education school staff that the request has not been approved by the base school principal, including the reason/s for the decision
- where study by distance education is approved:
 - notify the Overseas student and parent in writing of the decision, including the reason/s for the decision, and save as a record of contact in OneSchool
 - liaise with the school of distance education to formalise the arrangement, including instructions for invoicing the per-term subject fee accepting EQI students to study via distance education after day 20
 - update the Overseas student file in OneSchool.

Distance education school principal

- direct distance education school staff to invoice the base school to cost recover the applicable distance education costs (that is, \$250 per-subject per-term fee for accepting EQI students to study via distance education after day 20).

Base school staff

- verify the invoice received from distance education school staff
- request the base school business manager to organise invoice payment.

4. Monitor and Support

Base school staff

- facilitate access to learning support services
- maintain regular contact with the EQI student
- supervise distance education lessons and examinations
- check on the EQI student's progress in the subject
- liaise with school of distance education staff regarding the Overseas student's study and progress in the subject — refer to the [Course progress – Subclass 500 \(schools\) visa procedure](#).

EQI staff

- export an Overseas student course progress report from OneSchool each term
- review the distance education report to ensure the Overseas student is only studying one subject at any time
- where it is identified that the Overseas student is studying more than one subject at any time, escalate immediately to the school staff to rectify.

Base school staff

- where EQI staff advise and/or when it comes to the attention of base school staff that the EQI student is studying more than one subject at any time:
 - investigate why the Overseas student is studying more than one subject via distance education
 - liaise with base school teaching staff and the guidance officer regarding amending the Overseas student subject
 - liaise with the Overseas student about amending the Overseas student subject
 - liaise with the distance education school staff regarding transitioning out of the subject
 - escalate to base school principal, where required
 - provide update to EQI staff and email EQI staff with actions taken to rectify situation.

Definitions

Agent	Education agent registered with EQI to recruit students for EQI programs.
Base school principal	School principal from the state school where the EQI student is enrolled.
Base school staff	Employees of EQI schools, for example – International student coordinator, Homestay coordinator, Teacher, Head of department, Deputy principal, Principal, where the EQI student is enrolled.
Compelling circumstances	Circumstances which, in the opinion of EQI staff or school staff, are in the student's best educational interests.



Course	A course registered on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) offered by Department of Education trading as Education Queensland International.
Delegate	Is a classified officer (Heads of Department, Deputy Principals and Principals) nominated by the principal who is authorised to make some International Student Program decisions on behalf of the school principal.
DHA approved guardian	A parent, legal custodian or a relative over the age of 21 years approved by the Department of Home Affairs to be responsible for the welfare of students under the age of 18 years.
Distance education school principal	Principal of the school of distance education where the EQI student will study one subject.
Distance education school staff	Employees of the distance education school, that is, staff of the Brisbane School of Distance Education and Cairns School of Distance Education.
EQI	Education Queensland International
EQI staff	DoE employees working in DEi, trading as EQI.
Homestay provider	Homestay provider is a family, a couple or a single person who is approved by DEi or schools to host overseas students in their home. For Study Tours a homestay provider is also known as a Host Family. For International Services this includes families involved in reciprocal exchanges.
Overseas student	Student in Australia on visa subclass 500 (schools sector) enrolled in an EQI course.
Parent	Natural parent or legal custodian.
Prerequisite	An entry requirement, such as a senior subject, that students must meet before they are considered for entry.
School	For International Student Programs: Queensland state schools accredited by EQI to deliver international student programs. For Study Tours: Queensland state schools accredited to deliver study tours. For International Services: Queensland state schools, and non-state schools (for Global programs only).
School staff	Employees of schools with responsibilities to support international students. For example – International student coordinator, Homestay coordinator, Head of department, Deputy principal. Accredited Officer (Study tours).

Legislation

- [Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000](#) (Cwlth)
- [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#)



Delegations/Authorisations

- Nil

Related policies

- [International Student Programs – Subclass 500 \(schools\) visa](#)

Related procedures

- [Complaints and appeals – Subclass 500 \(schools\) visa](#)
- [Course progress – Subclass 500 \(schools\) visa](#)

Guidelines

- Nil

Supporting information/websites

- [Brisbane School of Distance Education](#)
- [Cairns School of Distance Education](#)
- [Entry and course progress standards](#)
- [Standard terms and conditions](#)
- [Student visa conditions](#)

Contact

International Student Programs

Department of Education International

Phone: 1800 316 540 (inside Australia) +61 7 3513 5301 (outside Australia)

Email: EQInternational@qed.qld.gov.au

Review date

24/01/2023

Superseded versions

Distance education V2.1

Creative Commons Licence

